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Debriefing Report from [REDACTED] 12 and 16 October 1967

1. The Maltese-flag freighter Amfiali arrived from Cuba at Zero Buoy -- off the entrance to Haiphong -- at 2030 hours on 13 June 1967. It carried about 10,400 tons of cargo that consisted largely of sugar in bags, but included a small amount of rubber products. [REDACTED] navigation aids visible at night included flashing lights at Hon Dau (20°-40-00 N - 106°-48-40 E) and Norway (20°-37-24 N 107°-09-12 E) Islands and lighted buoys marking the channel to Haiphong. [REDACTED] ocean-going ships were taken up the channel to Haiphong both day and night. [REDACTED] no patrol boat nor lightering activity at Zero Buoy, but fishing boats were in the area day and night. The latter carried no running lights at night, but did have lights inside them

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2. The Amfiali left Zero Buoy at 1100 hours on 15 June, moved to a sheltered position near the Norway Isles where a pilot and security guard were transferred from the Soviet ship Sinegorak, and proceeded to an anchorage at about 107°-05-48 E 20°-51-48 E (in Ha Long Bay near Le Goeland Island). The ship remained at that anchorage for about three weeks.

Single Soviet and Chinese Communist ships, [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] were at the anchorage. Lighters were alongside the Chinese ship by day, but none were seen moving away from it. No North Vietnamese craft other than fishing boats moved by day. Supplies were delivered to the ships only by night. Water was provided by a self-propelled barge of about 200 tons capacity. This barge once remained tied up to the Amfiali an entire day

waiting for darkness to cover its departure. No daytime patrol activity was observed, but every night between 2000 and 2300 hours a patrol boat passed close by the ship. Each time, North Vietnamese guards posted aboard the Amfiali challenged the patrol boat and shined a searchlight on it. Because the patrol boat was always loaded with soldiers and stopped every 7 to 10 days to change the guards on the Amfiali (usually 3 guards), [REDACTED] it was used to make nightly guard changes in the area. No navigation lights or buoys were visible at night at the Ha Long Bay anchorage.

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3. The Amfiali was instructed by NVN authorities to reduce its draft from approximately 28 feet to about 26 feet so that it could negotiate the channel to Haiphong. To reduce the draft, the Italian ship Agostino Bertani was brought alongside the Amfiali at 13 hours on 5 July at the Ha Long Bay anchorage, and 1800 tons of sugar were transferred to the Bertani over a two-day period.

4. At 0915 hours on 9 July the Amfiali left its Ha Long Bay anchorage for Haiphong. While traversing the Cua Nam Trieu channel, the ship scraped bottom at a point [REDACTED] near § 10 buoy (20-44-00 N 106-53-42 E). The exact time and place of the grounding were not recorded, however.

5. At 1800 hours on 9 July the Amfiali dropped anchor at approximately 20-48-00 N 106-50-12 E (west of Minh Tiep in the Cua Nam Trieu). On 20 July it was moved further upstream to approximately 20-50-12 N 106-46-36 E, where it dropped anchor at 1745 hours. At these anchorages, only occasional naval patrol boats

tags armed with machine guns, and smaller native craft were noted moving by day. Some traffic moved at night [REDACTED]

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6. On 23 July the Amfiali left its anchorage in the Cua Nam Trieu at 1840 hours and tied up at Berth # 1 at the Haiphong wharves at 2200 hours. Between 1530 and 1900 hours on 22 August it was moved from Berth # 1 to Berth # 2, where it remained until 31 August.

7. Security guards had shut down the ship's radio and had locked up cameras when they first boarded the ship in the Tonkin Gulf, but the ship was not searched until it tied up at Haiphong. The search was carried out by four search parties, each consisting of a ship's officer and one or two Vietnamese, at least one of whom was a soldier. The rest of the ship's crew remained on deck during the search, which seemed to be aimed at locating possible stowaways, rather than contraband. No restriction was placed on the use of radio receivers or binoculars. Binoculars were not examined at any time.

8. Volume of cargo offloaded from the Amfiali at Haiphong varied from 60 to 400 tons a day. Work was conducted on a low priority basis. Most of the time only two of the ship's five hatches were being worked simultaneously. Ship's gear was used exclusively in offloading to trucks and barges. Work frequently was slowed by the absence of both. The capacities of the largest barges was estimated to be between 200 and 300 tons, although many were much smaller. Offloading continued around the clock in four shifts. Stevedores worked with efficiency and dispatch when trucks and barges were at hand to receive cargo.

9. In contrast to the slow rate of discharge of the Amfiali, a rather new Soviet ship that the source estimated to be of about 15,000 DWT was assigned sufficient stevedores, trucks and barges to work all hatches simultaneously.

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It was offloaded in about a week.

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the Soviet ship arrived one morning between 0900 and

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1800, and missile firings were seen about 1600 that afternoon for the

first time in about ten days.

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a large part of the cargoes remained in the

port only temporarily. Some of the openly-stored steel products seemed to

be suffered significant deterioration, however. Trains operated within

port daily. More train activity was heard than seen because many of

rails run on the opposite sides of the warehouses.

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11. Barges operated both day and night within the port, but little could be seen of their night activities because they were blacked out. During the day, some of the barges assembled into groups that would be gone the next morning. A North Vietnamese guard posted aboard the ship stated that the barges traveled by night to avoid air attacks. Except for a bunker-barge of 250 to 300 ton capacity, no petroleum barges were noticed at Haiphong. Patrol boats were frequently seen, but no regular patrol schedule was apparent. Despite the protests of the Amfiali's master, all ships had to black-out when an air raid warning was sounded.

12. The North Vietnamese permitted foreign crewmen to go ashore from morning until midnight. Cables and letters could be sent and received via the Vietnam Ocean Shipping Agency (VOSEA). [REDACTED]

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25X1X [REDACTED] The VOSEA agent once entertained the ship's officers at dinner at a new Seaman's Club outside the port. He avoided political discussions, and showed no racial preference or prejudice toward any of the foreign maritime officers. Soviet and Polish sailors drank together at the Seaman's Club, but Chinese sailors remained by themselves. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] Some North Vietnamese stevedores, on the other hand, loudly declared their determination to fight the Americans to the end

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[REDACTED] the ship was unable to obtain beef, salami, sardines, eggs, spaghetti, crisco, tomatoes, squash, cauliflower, apples or oranges. Pork was substituted for beef. Other available foodstuffs included chicken, butter, bread, rice, bananas and pineapple. VOBA officials were able to provide some items such as corned beef and tomato paste by purchasing them from other ship's with surpluses

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